

Remarks

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 11, 12, 14-16, 18 and 19 are pending.

Claim 6 has been amended.

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 11, 12, 14-16, 18 and 19 are submitted herein for review.

No new matter has been added.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 12, 14-16, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the previously cited McGinty et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,712,688) in view of Smeets et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,836,825), in view of Weston et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,499,944), further in view of the newly cited reference Eglise et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,491,140). Applicants respectfully disagree with Examiner's claim of obviousness and offer the following remarks in response.

Claim 1 is directed to a method for processing coins introduced in a coin tester of an automatic unit delivering goods or services. The coin tester contains a selector for distinguishing the value of introduced coins, a pre-receptacle, at least one reserve for recycling certain coins, including a plurality of locations, each location being able to receive only one coin of any value, a bowl for giving back coins, and a safe for storing coins in bulk.

Among other steps, the method includes the step of storing an introduced coin in the safe instead of the reserve, if the reserve is full, or if the number of coins which are present in the reserve having the same value as the introduced coin is equal to a

predetermined maximum number of coins *where the maximum number of coins of a certain predetermined value is equal to the capacity of the reserve.*

Informing the rejection, on page 4 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner refers to a feature of claim 1, "said maximum number of coins in said reserve being a predetermined value that is equal to the capacity of the reserve," as an element of claim 1. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claim 1 does not include such an element. Instead, claim 1 recites, "*wherein the maximum number of coins of a certain predetermined value is equal to the capacity of the reserve,*" which does not mean the same thing as the element interpreted by the Examiner.

The invention as claimed in claim 1 is directed to either storing coins of different values in the reserve, or instead in the safe if the reserve is full; or if the number of coins which are present in the reserve having the same value is equal to a predetermined maximum number of coins wherein the maximum number of coins of a certain predetermined value is equal to the capacity of the reserve. In other words, one type of coin can actually fill up the entire reserve.

The newly cited prior art, namely Eglise describes a device comprising several storage tubes, each dedicated to a specific type of coins. It is therefore not possible for a particular type of coin to fill up the entire reserve, i.e. all the tubes. Applicants therefore submit that the Eglise reference does not teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 1 and 18, namely, "*wherein the maximum number of coins of a certain predetermined value is equal to the capacity of the reserve.*"

As such, even if the references are combined as suggested by the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that the combined references do not teach or suggest all of

the elements as claimed in independent claims 1 and 18. For example, neither McGinty nor Eglise, either alone or in combination with one another, teach or suggest that *the maximum number of coins of a certain predetermined value is equal to the capacity of the reserve.*

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent claims 1 and 18 be withdrawn. Likewise, as claims 3, 5-7, 9, 12, and 14-16 depend from claim 1, and claim 19 depends from claim 18, these claims should be allowed for at least the same reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 11, 12, 14-16, and 18-19 are in condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner feels that an interview would facilitate the prosecution of this Application he is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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